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PROPERTY OF

UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1994-1995 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1996

PART II. ASIA AND OCEANIA

Section 6 - Philippines

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

GE.95-02464

II.6 PHILIPPINES

1. Beneficiary population

1. At 31 December 1994, 3,758 Vietnamese received material assistance from UNHCR comprising 2,663 persons determined not to be refugees, 428 persons transiting in the Philippines found not to qualify for the United States Orderly Departure Programme, 191 refugees and 476 resettlement processing cases from camps in Hong Kong. There was also one remaining Cambodian refugee.

2. In addition, there were some 400 non-Indo-Chinese refugees and asylum-seekers of various nationalities residing in Manila and other localities in the provinces of Baguio, Quezon and Mindanao.

2. Developments in 1994 and 1995

(a) Vietnamese

3. Following the recommendations of the Fifth and Sixth Steering Committee of the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees, an end-1995 target date was set for the termination of the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees (CPA). UNHCR Branch Office in Manila oriented its counselling activities towards voluntary repatriation of the screened-out Vietnamese, and the accelerated resettlement of the screened-in Vietnamese. The assistance programme was further rationalized and camps were consolidated consistent with the reduced caseload. The Regional Resettlement Transit Centre (RRTC) and the Philippines Refugee Processing Centre (PRPC) in Morang, Bataan district, were officially closed by the end of 1994. The population in Bataan was transferred to the Philippines First Asylum Camp (PFAC) in Puerto Princesa on Palawan Island and to the Philippines Refugee Transit Centre (PRTC) in Manila. A total of 775 screened-out Vietnamese applied for voluntary repatriation and 761 persons left the Philippines during 1994, representing the highest rate of repatriation since the voluntary repatriation programme's inception in 1989.

4. In order to encourage voluntary repatriation of screened-out Vietnamese to achieve completion of the CPA by 31 December 1995, the Government of the Philippines concluded a Memorandum of Understanding for the Orderly Return Programme with the Government of Viet Nam on 5 February 1995. A total of 619 refugees departed from the Philippines for resettlement in third countries during 1994. Another 1,140 Vietnamese, who had been transferred from Hong Kong, were resettled from the Philippines.

5. From January to the end of May 1995, 113 screened-out Vietnamese voluntarily repatriated to their country of origin. Since this time the majority of candidates for voluntary repatriation have withdrawn their applications in the expectation that the draft legislation being proposed by the United States Congress might result in further resettlement possibilities to that country.

6. An Executive Order was issued in May 1995 to grant permanent residence to Vietnamese nationals married to Philippine citizens and to their children and relatives who were evacuated by the Philippines Navy from Viet Nam between 1975 and 1978.

(b) Non-Indo-Chinese

7. In the case of assistance for non-Indo-Chinese refugees, the initial allocation was made on the assumption that 186 non-Indo-Chinese refugees and their dependants would require assistance in the form of a subsistence allowance, rent, education and health care for an average of nine months. Due to the difficulties experienced by refugees in finding employment, payment of a subsistence allowance had to be extended from nine to twelve months, which resulted an upward revision to the initial allocation.

8. UNHCR remains actively involved in the promotion of refugee law and humanitarian principles in the Philippines. In collaboration with the Refugee Services Philippines (RSP), the UNHCR Branch Office in Manila organized a national conference on Refugee Issues and Prospects: the Government of the Philippines Experiences, which was attended by local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), members of academic and human rights groups, and government officials. The recommendations of this forum were submitted to the Government of the Philippines for consideration.

3. 1996 country programmes

(a) Objectives

9. In view of recent withdrawals of voluntary repatriation applicants and the marked decrease in new applications it is most unlikely that the target set by the Steering Committee to conclude CPA activities by the end of 1995 can be met. Consequently, it cannot be ruled out that care and maintenance assistance for screened-out Vietnamese in the Philippines will be required into 1996. However, efforts will continue to further encourage voluntary repatriation of screened-out Vietnamese and to accelerate the resettlement of Vietnamese refugees.

10. Assistance will continue to be provided to non-Indo-Chinese refugees and asylum-seekers. The Branch Office in Manila will continue to pursue with the Government of the Philippines the implementation of the recommendations made during the National Conference on Refugee Issues and Prospects in November 1994.

(b) Proposed budgets for 1996

(i) General Programmes

11. **Care and maintenance**: Care and maintenance assistance in the form of a subsistence allowance will be provided for 200 non-Indo-Chinese refugees and their 109 dependants to cover the cost of food, accommodation, health care, education and vocational training.

(ii) Special Programmes

12. **CPA**: Activities under the CPA in the first-asylum countries are scheduled to be completed by the end of 1995. UNHCR is actively pursuing its programme activities according to the recommendations of the Fifth and Sixth Steering Committee to phase out its assistance under the CPA arrangements on 31 December 1995 and, thus, no budgetary provision has been planned for assistance under the CPA in 1996.

13. Depending on the rate of the implementation of voluntary repatriation and the Orderly Return Programme in the second half of 1995, and further deliberations of the Steering Committee, additional funding for 1996 may be required to cover the costs of care and maintenance assistance to the remaining screened-out caseload.

(c) Implementing partners

14. The Government of the Philippines through the Western Command of the Armed Forces (WESCOM) and the Task Force on International Refugee Assistance and Administration (TFIRAA) are the main implementing partners in Palawan and the Philippines Refugees Transit Centre in Manila, respectively. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is responsible for all medical examinations and travel of refugees for resettlement to third countries and for the voluntary repatriation of the screened-out Vietnamese. The International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) and the International Social Service (ISS) are providing repatriation counselling and education. These agencies will phase out their activities in June 1995.

15. The Community and Family Services International (CFSI) provides mental health care and counselling in the Transit Centre in Manila.

16. The RSP implements the non-Indo-Chinese refugee programme in urban areas on behalf of UNHCR.

(d) Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

17. Variations due to changes in budget parameters are not discussed in the subsequent analysis (Overview of UNHCR Activities, Part I (A/AC.96/845) refers).

(i) 1994 expenditure (all sources of funds)

18. The 1994 expenditure was lower than revised estimates mainly due to under-expenditure in all chapters of the budget, most significantly under their travel budget. This reflects gradual scaling down of the operation in the Philippines. The PRPC in Bataan was closed at the end of 1994.

(ii) Revised 1995 requirements (all sources of funds)

19. The revised 1995 requirements are not significantly different from initial estimates.

(iii) Initial 1996 requirements (all sources of funds)

20. The 1996 initial requirements are lower, mainly due to the gradual scaling down of the UNHCR operation in the Philippines.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN THE PHILIPPINES

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1994	1995		1996	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1994 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
507.9	324.2	578.3	CARE AND MAINTENANCE	578.3
4.3 a/	–	–	VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION	–
0.3 a/	–	–	LOCAL SETTLEMENT	–
807.5 b/	1,045.2	1,033.4	RESETTLEMENT	–
688.3	689.7	637.8	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Overview Tables (Part II)	636.7
2,008.3	2,059.1	2,249.5	SUB-TOTAL OPERATIONS	1,215.0
50.4	55.0	70.9	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Overview Tables (Part II)	79.8
2,058.7	2,114.1	2,320.4	TOTAL (1)	1,294.8
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
4,850.7	1,424.3	1,544.2	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION	–
142.6	112.4	225.9	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Overview Tables (Part II)	–
–	–	–	OTHER TRUST FUNDS	–
97.6	127.2	50.0	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT Junior Professional Officer See Overview Tables (Part II)	50.0
5,090.9	1,663.9	1,820.1	TOTAL (2)	50.0
7,149.6	3,778.0	4,140.5	GRAND TOTAL (1+2)	1,344.8

a/ obligation incurred against Other Programmes
b/ of which US$ 12,599 incurred against Other Programmes